University magazine

April 2003

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Spring Music Issue

Offset

Mojo Filson

Never Heard of It

Fat Mike talks politics

also:

Hip-hop, home recording, Latin alternative and music magazines

STEREO

Inside:

24 pages of music reviews, band interviews & more

Editor's letter

At this year's Academy Awards, practically every actor or actress who accepted an award attempted to justify having such a seemingly trivial event while our country is at war. Some tried to make political statements, while Nicole Kidman simply stated, "Art is important." Although I scoffed at the time, there was some truth to their self-righteous speeches. We can't, and shouldn't, ignore what is going on in our world today. At the same time, we can't be overwhelmed by sensationalistic media and agenda-toting politicians. We have to keep thinking for ourselves, living our lives and doing the things we love. For the celebrities at the Oscars, that meant showing up to accept their awards. For many of us, however, the solution is much more simple: music.

Music is one thing that is certain. It is always there for us, win or lose, war or peace, happy or sad. Singers and songwriters know how to express the things we can't express ourselves; musicians always seem to find just the right note to fit our mood. It comes in every size, shape and flavor, but all good music has one thing in common: it makes you think. It can make you question what's going on around you, help you to better understand the world, make you feel that you're not alone, or simply realize how lucky you are in your own life.

In this issue, you'll find a sampling of opinions and articles on a wide variety of musical topics. Eddie Monterrubio introduces us to the world of Latin alternative music. Allison Eaton explores the evolution of hip-hop. Fat Mike, lead singer of legendary punk band NOFX, shares his views on today's political climate. And that's just the tip of the iceberg.

Take a minute, not to forget your problems, but to put them into perspective and see the world in a different light. Take comfort in your music. In the words of Bob Marley, "One good thing about music, when it hits you, you feel no pain."

Mandy Wright
Editor in chief

University Magazine

April 2003 • Volume 34, Number 7

www.csulb.edu/~univmag/

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University Magazine is a publication of Forty-Niner Publications. Signed letters are welcome and must include the author's phone number.

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Photo by Leslie Lewis

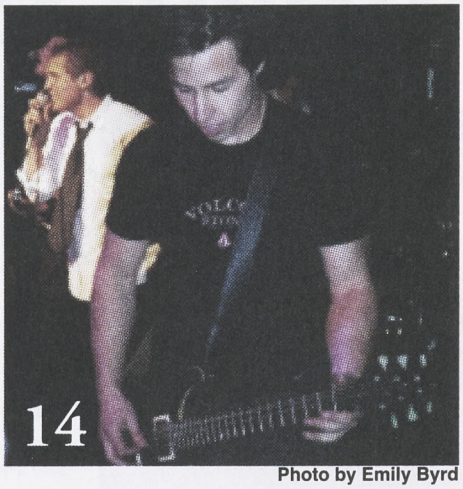

Photo by Emily Byrd

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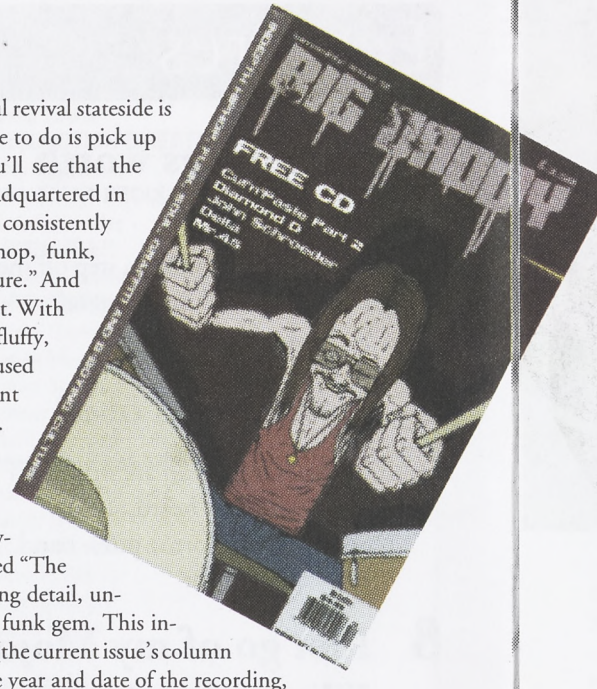
- **Here comes summer!** Read about cool places to travel, plus the lowdown on garduation
- Check out **University Magazine** online (updated bi-monthly) at: **www.csulb.edu/~univmag/**

Music rags worth reading

By John Fuller

Go to the nearest newsstand, book store, café or record store. Check out just how many magazines there are covering music. It is so overwhelming that it's enough to make you throw up your arms, give up, and grab the nearest Rolling Stone or Spin. The problem with that is all you end up getting is some watered-down, commercialized, pre-packaged, formulaic tripe that multi-million dollar record companies put out in order to secure profits. Certain magazines, thanks to the big advertising dollars thrown at them, willingly write up nice, glowing reviews for many of the artists on these big record labels' payrolls.

Other magazines, like Fader, try posing as "underground," and are full of pretension and self-awareness. They are all too concerned with hairstyles and being the first to cash in on the latest trend. The magazines reviewed here are not that way. They are independent-minded, like the artists they cover, well-written, and incisive. They are more concerned with quality music, artistic expression and freedom than with sales figures and key demographics.



Big Daddy

Although the funk and soul revival stateside is now in mid-swing, all you have to do is pick up a copy of Big Daddy and you'll see that the music never left England. Headquartered in Nottingham, this bi-monthly consistently and thoroughly covers "hip hop, funk, soul, graffiti, and b-boying culture." And this is, really, an understatement. With many music magazines, you get fluffy, uninteresting features that are used to basically promote the current "hot" artist's projects or releases. Not so with Big Daddy. What you get with Big Daddy is closer to a history lesson in where the music came from. Every issue features a column titled "The Funk 45 Files," that, in amazing detail, unearths a single, long-forgotten funk gem. This includes a short bio on the group (the current issue's column is on the Soul Reflections), the year and date of the recording, their discography, the equipment and studio used, the producer, and the number of copies pressed (which is usually pretty scant, considering that the groups and singles covered in "The Funk 45 Files" only released a handful of releases, making them worth a lot of money today!).

Every issue also has an extensive interview on a legendary hip hop figure(s). Past issues have featured Biz Markie, the Ultramagnetic MCs, and producer/DJ Jazzy Jay. When reading these interviews and just how knowledgeable and insightful they are, you almost forget that hip hop was started in the United States and wonder why no one covers the music like this over here.

Big Daddy also makes sure to include some nice glossy pictures of selected graffiti artists in every issue. The current issue includes an interview with artist Solo One and his excursion into the use of stickering as a medium, as well the Amsterdam-based writer DELTA and his design and architecture-influenced stylings.

There are also plenty of reviews of current hip-hop, funk and soul albums and singles—a must for all the true crate-diggers out there.

Punk Planet

Editor and "trash collector" Daniel Sinker has been putting Punk Planet out since the early-to-mid '90s. He has continued to cover interesting, genre-expanding, and challenging stories and bands with the same do-it-yourself ethic that the magazine started out with. With magazines like Maximumrocknroll taking the "you're not punk enough" stance, while others like Rolling Stone are totally and commercially distorting the concept and values of "punk rock," it's good to have Punk Planet here to lend an inclusive, honest, and positive voice.

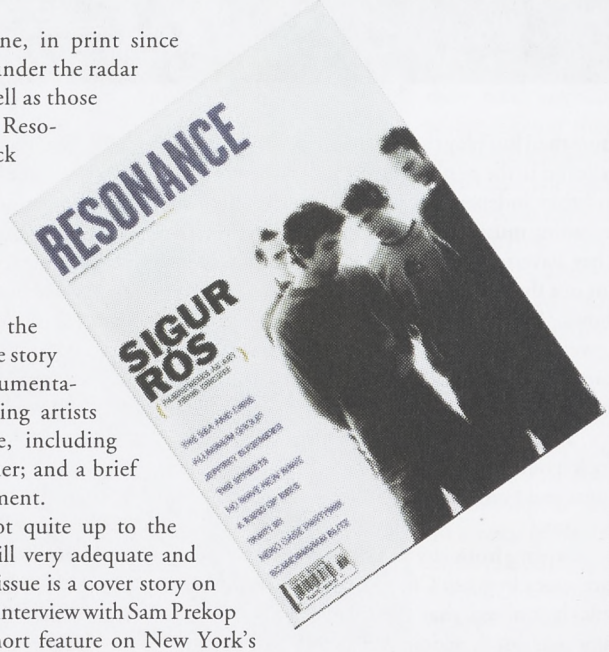
Punk Planet's coverage of interesting, non-punk artists, such as Chicago post-rockers Tortoise and Boston-bred true school emcee Mr. Lif—artists who define the punk ethos of self sufficiency and independent vision and action—help readers to see that "punk" is more an ideology than a fashion statement.

Another defining characteristic of Punk Planet is its commitment to political and social awareness. Take for instance the current issue's cover story, in which the magazine asks bands such as Ted Leo, Sleater-Kinney, Anti-Flag, and Propaghandi to speak out about the "artists' responsibility in a time of war," or the article "The War Comes Home," which discusses just how far our government is willing to go to suppress and punish anti-war protesters.

Punk Planet also has a regular column titled the DIY Files, which is all about–well, doing things yourself, and ranges from growing your own food to promoting your own shows. They also regularly review a number of the more interesting self-published zines that pop up every few months and include original, new short stories.

Also in the new issue is an article on the late, great Joe Strummer, and interviews with Cursive and Black Dice.

Resonance



This Seattle-based magazine, in print since 1994, covers musical acts just under the radar of main-stream notoriety, as well as those persisting in semi-obscurity. Resonance, mostly printed in black and white, is neatly and simply laid out, and covers a wide array of musical genres, as well as music-related media and arts.

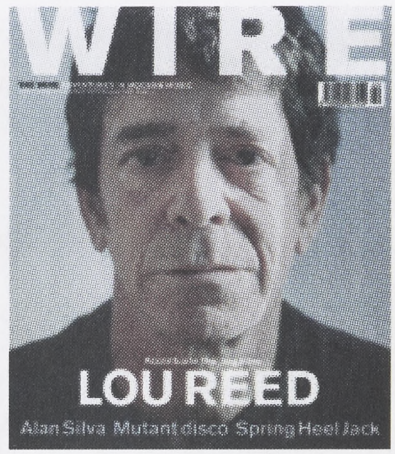
Some of the highlights of the current issue include: a five-page story on recent, unconventional documentaries; a feature on up-and-coming artists hailing from northern Europe, including electro king, Mr. Velcro Fastener; and a brief history of the "no wave" movement.

Though the reviews are not quite up to the minute, they are nonetheless still very adequate and encompassing. Also in the new issue is a cover story on Icelandic's ethereal Sigur Ros, an interview with Sam Prekop of The Sea and Cake, and a short feature on New York's psych-art rockers Onieda.

You can also check them out online at http://www.resonancemag.html for exclusive Internet-only stories.

Wire

What started out primarily as a jazz-focused magazine 20 years ago has now become the leader at the forefront of experimental, groundbreaking, and avant-garde musical expression, covering artists and movements all over the world. But don't worry; they still feature plenty of jazz.



The sheer range and volume of music that Wire covers (more than half of every issue is reviews) can be daunting. Unless you are an obsessive music fan, don't be surprised if you hardly recognize any of the artists they are talking about. Wire is all about covering new, refreshing, often overlooked, and sometimes challenging music. Their reviews are among the most in-depth and detailed of any magazine you're bound to come across. To help you with all of this, they are nice enough to include with every few issues or so, a sampler CD of some of the artists they especially like.

The current issue has an eight-page cover story on legendary rocker Lou Reed. In it, Reed talks about his new album/project, The Raven, the re-release of the influential Metal Machine Music, and the techniques Reed has used over the years to create some of his most interesting music. Also in this issue is the bi-monthly feature called "The Primer," covering a musical movement that took place in New York in the late 1970s aptly dubbed Mutant Disco, which was a sound clash of disco, funk, and punk rock, and included such contrasting acts as James Chance, ESG, Kid Creole, and the Johnny Rotten-fronted PiL.

With many music rags, the reviews, articles, and interviews sound so rehashed and unsurprising that it seems like you've heard it all a hundred times before. For excellent music journalism on new, original music that you don't hear over and over on the radio all day long, check out Wire and you'll definitely be satisfied. UM

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www.thewire.co.uk

NEVER HEARD OF IT...

By Mandy Wright
Photos by Leslie Lewis

D.J. Dell'osa jumps frantically around the stage, gripping the mic with both hands as he belts out heartfelt and edgy lyrics. To his right, Jeff Anenberg focuses intently on his guitar, his brow furrowed as his fingers move lithely across the strings. As the band leaps into their rendition of "Fill Me up Buttercup," the crowd goes wild.

The band is Southern California punk up-and-comers Never Heard of It, and if you're never heard of them, you're missing out.

Before the band officially formed in spring 2001, NHOI began as a way for Dell'osa and Anenberg to kill time in high school. The two would switch off between playing drums and guitar, and played mostly covers.

"We would cover every Screeching Weasel song, every MXPX song," Dell'osa says.

Now, just two years later, the band does more than just play their own songs. They are firm believers in the punk credo DIY, or do-it-yourself, and they independently handle everything from recording music to booking shows to selling CDs. They have toured the United States four times, put out three CDs and played countless sold-out shows. The road to underground punk success, however, was not so cut and dry. NHOI's first tour outside of Southern California was rougher than the band expected.

"It was actually pretty crazy because we had to book it ourselves," Dell'osa says. "I seriously spent hours and hours on the phone getting rejected all the time."

Driving from city to city in their now-signature avocado green Chevy Express van, the band quickly realized that their Southern California fame was not as widespread as they had hoped.

"Some shows there would be like five people and it was so humiliating, coming from the Glasshouse [in Pomona] with like 700 kids," Dell'osa says. "We've paid our dues, and now every single place we go, every place, every city fans are singing along, wearing NHOI t-shirts."

Since that first tour, the band's line-up has changed more than their underwear, with Dell'osa and Anenberg remaining the only steady members. Drummer Chris Beltran had to leave temporarily because of an injury, and since then the band has had roving members with each tour. Bassist Johnny Brittain recently played his last show with NHOI at Chain Reaction in Anaheim.

"We're definitely gonna miss Johnny, but Greg will make up for it," Dell'osa says. "Our newest member Greg used to rock out like crazy in the band Hummer, and has an amazing voice, too. He is playing and singing back-ups on our latest four song EP release titled "The New SH*T."

Despite the group's ever-changing lineup, the atmosphere remains comfortable and laid-back while touring.

"There's never been any problem with us on

the road," Dell'osa says. "We're made up of four best friends. That's what's cool about our music is that we're just friends having fun. It's never been so serious."

While there may not be any bickering on the road, the band has had its share of wild times while touring. The very same Chevy that carried them through their first tour got the boys into a spot of trouble recently on their way to a show. While driving through a neighborhood after three days of solid rain, the band realized they were lost and had to make a u-turn. The smooth handling of the Chevy, however, couldn't quite execute the turn, and before they knew it the band were stranded on someone's lawn, their tires sinking into the mud. An onlooker mistook the predicament for an intentional act of vandalism and called the police.

"The cops came, they arrested us," Dell'osa says. "We were in the jail with all these criminals. [We are] all these white kids from California, and I was like, 'We're going to get killed.'"

The band didn't get killed, but they have since gotten rid of the van. The foursome are now the proud owners of an RV, tentatively named Bella Donna. In fact, the bigger, better vehicle may be a sign that NHOI is ready to move up in the world and sign to a label.

> "We're made up of four best friends. That's what's cool about our music is that we're just friends having fun. It's never been so serious."
>
> — D.J. Dell'osa

"Things are in the making right now," Dell'osa says. "Our manager pretty much takes care of it, he tells us stay on the road and keep doing what we're doing."

For the time being, NHOI is getting by just fine with their down-to-earth attitudes, their dedication, and of course, their music. The band will go to any lengths to promote their music and connect with their fans, including selling CDs at shopping malls and gas stations, and approaching people at red lights and during traffic jams. Still, Dell'osa says the band's main focus is entertaining fans at their live performances.

"We could care less how many CDs we sell, it's all about the shows," he says. "We want to eventually have meeting spots where before the show or after the show we have a bowling tournament or meet up at this mall or whatever."

NHOI got a chance to win over some new fans with this easy-going attitude when they played the Vans Warped Tour last summer. As the only unsigned band on the tour, the boys of NHOI held their own. After attracting a sizeable crowd during each set, the band stuck around for hours at their merchandise booth, chatting with old friends and making new ones.

D.J. Dell'osa, left, and Jeff Anenberg pump up the crowd at Chain Reaction in Anaheim.

Even after playing a nationwide tour like the Warped Tour, the band is not letting success go to their heads, and they want to keep doing what they're doing for as long as possible.

"It's just been more fun, we look at our fans as our friends pretty much," Dell'osa says. "It's just like our parties are getting bigger (...) I seriously think life is so good. I wouldn't want to put on a suit and go to work nine to five." UM

Above, Johnny Brittain focuses intently on his bass whle playing his last show with Never Heard of It. Left, D.J. Dell'osa performs his signature move at Chain Reaction.

NHOI STATS

Discography:
Unmotivated (2001)
Moving on (2001)
Limited Edition (2002)
The New Sh*t (2003)

Number of U.S. tours: 4

Favorite movies:
The Big Lebowski
Casino
Mr. Deeds
Dumb and Dumber

Recommended listening:
Taking Back Sunday
The Exit
Reggie and the Full Effect
Ben Harper

TOUR VEHICLE STATS:

Name (tentative): Bella Donna
Type: RV
Length: 35 feet
Amenities: X-Box, fridge, shower, stove, microwave

I let go of my Mojo

Filson, that is

By Joe Licavoli

Seth Snyder faced a tough decision. Should he stay in a band which he had been involved with for 10 years, or depart from the music business to pursue higher education?

Snyder decided in October 2002 that he would leave the band. After being the vocalist for Anaheim-based Mojo Filson, Snyder left the band and made the transition back to school to study music.

Along with Snyder, Mojo Filson consisted of Ryan Prickett on bass guitar, Greg Guerin on drums and Mike Filson, who played guitar. Filson was the chief songwriter and head of the band, says Snyder.

On the surface, Snyder's decision to leave the band appeared to be based on a desire to go back to school. Deep down, however, there were more reasons behind his exit from the band.

"Not being the principal songwriter made it difficult for me to do the sound I wanted, mostly," Snyder says. "There was always one leader, and that was [Filson]. We always deferred off each other well and included everyone in every decision, but when it came to songwriting, I really had the desire to play a certain kind of music. I can't play an instrument so I can't do that, and that's where [Filson] came in."

Since Snyder did not write the music, conflicts arose within the band.

"Naturally, the songs that came out sounded like songs [Filson] would write, not songs I would write," Snyder says. "Then I would do some of the lyrics, if not most of the lyrics."

Snyder is not currently playing with any other bands.

"As far as being a singer, I'm off the market," Snyder says. "I have to learn how to appreciate singing in a different way and that kills my interest in performing now, because I am used to singing a certain way, in a band. And I need to learn how to do it a different way, a way that I'm more comfortable with and less hard on my vocal chords. So I want to sing some mellow stuff, but I need to take

Seth Snyder (above) ponders his life-altering decision to leave Mojo Filson.

Right, the guys of Mojo Filson before the split.

Photos courtesy of Mojo Filson

a while off from singing with a band."

The decision for Snyder to leave Mojo Filson was tough because he had been in the band for so long, says Synder's wife, Shelby.

"He was thinking about [leaving the band] for so long and I knew it was just a matter of him admitting it to himself, so I just understood that it was the right time and the right situation," Shelby says. "I actually told him to really think about it and have it in his brain that he is going to be leaving the band, but still be there to see if that's really what he wants."

Shelby says there were mixed feelings about Snyder leaving the band.

"Part of me was really thankful because it just took so much time, and if they ever did become rock stars [it would be tough] because my idea of a marriage is not a guy on the road who I never see," Shelby says. "But I really like to see [Snyder] sing and I really like to see them perform, and I always had a lot of fun so I knew that I would miss that. So now I am really happy for him that he was able to make that decision and make that step."

Vanessa Hernandez, a longtime fan of Mojo Filson, says she was sad when she heard that Snyder had left the band, but she is hopeful that the music the band produced will continue. She says she will continue to support Filson and Prickett with new musical projects.

"I know that [Filson] and [Prickett] are coming up with new ideas, new sounds and new lyrics, and I am just excited about what's going to come out of that," Hernandez says. "I'm very excited because I have been living across the country and this is the first time I will be able to be around during the process of the new music."

Mojo Filson released a full-length album, "My Karma Ran Over Your Dogma," in June 2002, which had a variety of hard rockers and mellow songs. Filson explains that the mellow music on the latest album was basically for Snyder. He tried to write music to please Snyder because he knew that Snyder was more into the mellow side of the music.

"This may sound a little co-dependent, but every single ounce of writing a song I go, 'Will [Snyder] be okay with this?'" Filson says. "He's very influential, in a passive-aggressive way to let you know that, 'I'm not happy with [the musical direction] here.'"

The musical clash came about while recording the album, which made the release a long process. It was a big accomplishment for the band just to get the album done, Filson says.

"There are so many areas on [the album] which I would have liked to pull back towards my liking that I took to his, and they never quite got to his, so it's right in the middle," Filson says.

Another reason for Snyder's departure was the creation of the new album. Filson says that when the album was being written and recorded, Snyder was passionate about it so the decisions were made together. Filson thought they did something they were both passionate about, and then it turned. Filson says that the change in Snyder's opinion toward the band occurred because of the lack of response from the album.

> "[Snyder] is very influential, in a passive-aggressive way to let you know that, 'I'm not happy with [the musical direction] here.'"
> — Mike Filson

"That has something to do with it," Snyder says. "We weren't getting the feedback we had hoped for initially and it wasn't coming fast enough. I was impatient, really impatient, and I wanted to see a return on the investment. I was surprised [Filson] wasn't less patient. He was willing to wait it out. He was like, 'This is a slow boiling kettle,' and I'm like, 'Yeah, but it should be running over right now—I'm in a hurry.'"

> "As far as being a singer, I'm off the market. I have to learn how to appreciate singing in a different way and that kills my interest in performing now, because I am used to singing a certain way, in a band."
> — Seth Snyder

Filson says he was willing to wait it out because he understood that it would take more time to gain attention in Orange County.

Another disadvantage was that the band was unwilling to go to Los Angeles for shows.

"My experiences in L.A. have been pretty negative," Snyder says. "L.A. is so hard to initially break into and I'm sure if had I stuck it out maybe I would have gained that following that is in L.A. that people are talking about. It wasn't fast enough for me and I was too impatient."

Snyder cites another reason for leaving the band as being his ideas about the music industry, which differ from Filson's ideas.

"[Filson] and I differ on this a lot," he says. "I have this disillusionment with the machine of the music industry and L.A. has a lot to do with that. It's all image and short-lived careers. You don't see what we wanted out there. We wanted a U2 career and a Pearl Jam career, and that's just about unheard of now."

Mojo Filson did have some success in Los Angeles. At the Viper Room, the band played to a full house, Filson says.

There was also always the chance that the band could get instantly famous and that was something that Snyder says he did not want but Filson did.

"I got totally disillusioned with the whole face of possible fame, because we tasted a slab of that in our time and it was nice, but how much can a person take?" Snyder says. "I wasn't willing to go there. I don't want to be famous. I used to want it, but I don't need it like [before]. I used to need that approval and [now] I don't need that approval."

Filson says his views are getting more political and he thinks his music is going to reflect that. The next album will be much more meaningful, and he is hoping to have some more heavy-hitting lyrics.

Filson also says that there will be a problem finding a singer now that Snyder has left the band.

"It's going to be hard to find the right singer who's the right age and who's down with the music," Filson says. "I just really wish I could sing."

Filson is working on a new EP for which he will be doing the vocals, in order to show his vocal capabilities. As far as the band moving forward and finding a new singer, Filson says that they are still looking for someone. The problem for Filson is that he thinks he may face the same obstacles with a new singer trying to connect with the music he creates.

Snyder says that when he does make more music he will create something that is mellower, and it will be something that he can stand behind completely. UM

latin ALTERNATIVE

By Eddie Monterrubio

I opt to spend my Saturday morning at a local record store browsing through the countless albums that fill the shelves. My eyes are fixated on the front row, my fingers are running through the tops of the little shrink-wrapped treasures. It all becomes so hypnotic—the tick tack sound of albums slapping against each other and the glare from the lights above. My fingers stop for a second and I feel my face turn red, and a guilty smirk spreads across my face. It's an album I'd never admit to once owning and loving. A little further down the row I find other albums that remind me of specific periods of time and people in my life that made me smile, songs that changed the course of my life. My fingers keep running along with the memories now in motion.

Some music paints a picture in your mind and molds the lyrics to your own story, making the song exclusively about you, your love, your loss and your sorrow. All of us know these songs, some so meaningful that they'll play at your wedding, or simply play every night as you fall asleep. But what makes an album great? Is it one that triggers the vault of human emotion? Or is it one that encompasses great lyrics, flawless arrangements, cutting-edge style or breakthrough experimentation?

To identify what exactly makes a great album is like asking, "1950s Elvis or 1970s Elvis?" Critics, imposters and posers can argue to their hearts' content. The truth of the matter is that a great album combines all aspects of memory and music. In its relatively new existence, Latin alternative artists have given the Latin, Latin American and Spanish community their own breed of great alternative albums, some which have crossed language barriers and creating a world audience.

So here they are:
The Greatest Albums in Latin Alternative

1. Café Tacuba: "Re"

Café Tacuba is arguably the most creative band in Latin alternative. In "Re," Café Tacuba has fused violin, trumpet, flute, saxophone, cello and piano with guitar, drum machines, keyboard, stand up bass and acoustic guitar, among other elements. They filled in any gaps with instruments such as the jarana, meodion, tololoche, contrabjao and guitarron to create a unique sound. It was hailed by critics as one of the most groundbreaking works in Latin alternative to date, comparable to the Beatles' "The White Album" for its bravery in music experimentation. "Re" broke the stereotype of what rock *en español* was supposed to be, and introduced a new, indescribable sound.

2. Maldita Vecindad: "Circo"

The year was 1991 when Maldita handed the world an album that included "Poco de Sangre," "Kumbala," "Pachuco" and "Solin," songs that would become both pop and cult-underground anthems in Latin alternative. "Circo" opened the doors for punk-ska music in the Latin alternative market, and showed that regardless of its crude underground beginnings, ska and punk could be successful in the popular market. More importantly, "Circo" is a social commentary about poverty, hunger and corruption made successful in a country where opposing opinions are quickly quieted.

3. Jaguares: "Equilibrio del Jaguar"

After the copyright battles that resulted in the Caifanes break-up, Saul Hernandez bounced back from throat cancer with the most compelling work of his career. Produced by Don Was (Rolling Stones, Bob Dylan), "Equilibrio" is a mystical journey. With tracks such as "Hurancan," and "Detras de los Cerros." "Equilibrio del Jaguar" symbolizes the musician's departure from the Caifanes signature sound into a new generation of musical exploration.

4. Manu Chao: "Clandestino"

With songs in Spanish, English, French and Portuguese, "Clandestino" can be found in the world music section of most record stores, which signifies the diversity in its music. Manu Chao recorded this album while he traveled the world, and in the process made social, economical and political observations about the places he visited. "Welcome to Tijuana: tequila, sexo y marijuana," he sings on one track. Manu Chao is another artist on this list (Cerati, Bunbury, and you may also count Jaguares) to have broken away from his former group and who is finding success as a solo artist. Chao, like other artists on this list, doesn't shy away from political criticisms.

5. Soda Stereo: "Unplugged"

This album is a masterpiece by a musical genius. Thus far, this is the best effort of the MTV Unplugged series. Recorded at the tail end of the band's run, "Unplugged" reinvents songs from Soda Stereo's career. The band is considered among the founders and godfathers of Latin alternative music. The Unplugged album captures the essence of what this band was and what they meant to the Latin alternative music culture. After decades of touring and recording, Soda Stereo have now become muses to the next era of Latin alternative artists.

6. Enrique Bunbury: "Pequeno"

Pequeno is evidence of Bunbury's musical maturity. Perhaps Latin alternative's version of Viva Hate, Pequeno is reminiscent of when Morrissey broke away from his former group, The Smiths and introduced to the world a strong album, which proved that life would indeed go on as a solo artist. Although Bunbury's solo material may not reach the cult status as his work with his former group, Heroes Del Silencio, he will never cease to surprise his fans and music critics alike.

7. Gustavo Cerati: "Bocanada"

Former front man for the Latin alternative group Soda Stereo (see number 5), Gustavo Cerati, like Enrique Bunbury and Manu Chao, has broken away from the roots of his original band to bloom into a new experimental musician. Bocanada gave listeners only a taste of what would follow in his still flourishing solo career. Fusing music elements from all aspects of world music, from lounge singing to jazz and electronica, Bocanada is masterful and beautifully arranged.

8. Babasonicos: "Jessico"

Describing Jessico is like attempting to describing a Van Gogh piece of art. From funk to electronic, from western to metal to disco to plain old rock and roll, Jessico has it all, and the end result is perhaps the most complete album on the list, one through 12.

9. Kinky: "Kinky"

Los Prisioneros redefined Latin Alternative in the '80s, Caifanes, CafÈ Tacuba and Maldita Vecindad did it in the '90s, and in the 21st century, Monterrey's Kinky is penetrating a whole new audience. What makes "Kinky" among the most unique albums in Latin alternative is not that the album itself had a successful crossover career, but that it in fact made the whole world cross into their realm. Kinky, the band, have found themselves touring in places such as Germany, Sweden, and into even more foreign land like Kansas. The album fuses all traditional Mexican folk elements with a worldly contemporary electronic and drum and bass sound. The result is a wonderfully twisted version of past and present generations with the capability to make leaps and bounds across continental sounds.

10. Jumbo: "Restaurant"

The band's mainstream freshman album launched them into an international spotlight, placing them on a list among the next generation's musical leaders. "Restaurant" leads the movement of the new power-alterna-pop era, fusing love ballads with loud guitars and keyboards. "Fotografia," "Siento Que," "Alienados Para Siempre" and "Aqui" are most notable, nicely moving along this blissful journey into sound. UM

Eddie Monterrubio is a music writer for mundorockero.com, a Latin alternative online publication.

Off-Campus

Mon, 04/07/03
Mary Fahl @ Roxy Theatre 7:00 pm
Flogging Molly @ El Rey Theatre 7:30 pm
The Movielife @ Chain Reaction 7:30 pm
The 88 @ House of Blues Sunset Strip 9:00 pm

Tue, 04/08/03
Turin Brakes @ Troubadour 7:00 pm
Flogging Molly @ El Rey Theatre 7:30 pm
Local Band Showcase @ Chain Reaction 7:30 pm
Millencolin @ House of Blues Anaheim 7:30 pm
Sean Healy Presents Onyx @ Key Club 7:30 pm
Bad Religion @ The Grove of Anaheim 8:00 pm
Duncan Sheik @ House of Blues Sunset Strip 9:00 pm
The Raveonettes @ Troubadour 9:30 pm

Wed, 04/09/03
The Raveonettes @ Glass House 7:00 pm
Bon Jovi @ STAPLES Center 7:30 pm
F Minus @ Chain Reaction 7:30 pm
Opiate for the Masses @ Whisky 7:30 pm
Tyrese @ House of Blues, Sunset Strip 7:30 pm
Flogging Molly @ House of Blues, Anaheim 8:00 pm
Folk Implosion @ Troubadour 8:00 pm
Zakk Wylde's Black Label Society @ Galaxy Theatre 8:00 pm
Mark Wills @ The Grove of Anaheim 8:30 pm

Thu, 04/10/03
Bon Jovi @ Arrowhead Pond of Anaheim 7:30 pm
Kelly Osbourne @ House of Blues Sunset Strip 7:30 pm
David Nelson Band @ Coach House 8:00 pm
Flogging Molly @ House of Blues Anaheim 8:00 pm
Future Bible Heroes @ Troubadour 8:00 pm
Sole @ Roxy Theatre 8:00 pm

Fri, 04/11/03
Offset* @ Soma in San Diego (*part of the Big Show II)
Bright Eyes @ Glass House 7:00 pm
Pinback @ El Rey Theatre 7:30 pm
Static Lullaby @ Chain Reaction 7:30 pm
The Butchies @ Troubadour 8:00 pm
Cky @ Whisky 8:00 pm
Ratt @ Galaxy Theatre 8:00 pm
Soulfly @ Roxy Theatre 8:00 pm
Pigface - Thrill Kill Kult @ Key Club 8:30 pm
George Clinton & Parliament @ House of Blues Anaheim 9:00 pm
Sound Tribe Sector 9 @ House of Blues Sunset Strip 9:00 pm

Sat, 04/12/03
Sum 41 @ Hollywood Palladium 6:30 pm
Cky (Camp Kill Yourself) @ Glass House 7:30 pm
Freeway People @ Whisky 7:30 pm
Limbeck-the Killingtons @ Chain Reaction 7:30 pm
Brother - Periscope - Ellerman @ Coach House 8:00 pm
Datsuns @ Troubadour 8:00 pm
Pig Face/Thrill Kill Kult/Zeromancer/Bile @ Galaxy Theatre 8:00 pm
Thrice @ Roxy Theatre 8:00 pm
Transplants @ House of Blues Anaheim 8:00 pm
Club Raw @ The Wiltern 9:00 pm

Sun, 04/13/03
Ataris @ House of Blues Anaheim 5:30 pm
Brian Bromberg Band @ Coach House 7:00 pm
Lovelight Shine (X-Jejune) @ Chain Reaction 7:30 pm
Datsuns @ Troubadour 8:00 pm

Sun, 04/13/03 (cont.)
Buju Banton @ House of Blues Sunset Strip 9:00 pm
Ataris @ House of Blues Anaheim 10:00 pm

Mon, 04/14/03
A Static Lullaby @ Troubadour 7:00 pm
Disturbed @ The Wiltern 7:00 pm
Dogwood with Lonely Kings @ Chain Reaction 7:30 pm
Delgados @ El Rey Theatre 8:00 pm

Tue, 04/15/03
Asesino @ Key Club 8:00 pm
Duncan Sheik @ House of Blues Anaheim 8:00 pm
Sum 41 @ The Grove of Anaheim 8:00 pm

Wed, 04/16/03
Oc Rocks @ House of Blues Anaheim 8:00 pm
Vilma Palma @ Key Club 8:30 pm
Keb' Mo' @ House of Blues Sunset Strip 9:00 pm

Thu, 04/17/03
Keepsake - Over It @ Chain Reaction 7:30 pm
Foo Fighters and the Transplants @ Universal Amphitheatre 7:45 pm
Maria McKee @ Galaxy Theatre 8:00 pm
George Thorogood @ House of Blues Anaheim 9:00 pm

Fri, 04/18/03
As I Lay Dying @ Chain Reaction 7:30 pm
Forplay W/Zack Hexum @ Whisky 7:30 pm
Foo Fighters and the Transplants @ Universal Amphitheatre 7:45 pm
Mason Jennings @ Troubadour 8:00 pm
Sons of Champlin @ Coach House
Tubes @ Galaxy Theatre 8:00 pm
World Premiere Bootleg 3000 @ Roxy Theatre 8:00 pm
Zwan @ The Wiltern 8:00 pm
George Thorogood @ House of Blues Sunset Strip 9:00 pm
Toto @ House of Blues Anaheim 9:00 pm

Sat, 04/19/03
The Faint @ Glass House 7:00 pm
Patty Larkin @ House of Blues Sunset Strip 7:00 pm
Backside-Union 13 @ Chain Reaction 7:30 pm
Alana Davis @ Roxy Theatre 8:00 pm
Cave In @ Troubadour 8:00 pm
Keb' Mo' @ House of Blues Anaheim 8:00 pm
Rayzing Sons @ Coach House 8:00 pm
Zwan @ The Wiltern

Sun, 04/20/03
Holy Molar @ Chain Reaction 7:30 pm
Rebirth of S.I.N. featuring DJ Z-Trip @ House of Blues Anaheim 9:00 pm

Mon, 04/21/03
Groovie Ghoulies @ Chain Reaction 7:30 pm
Sepultura @ House of Blues Anaheim 8:00 pm

Tue, 04/22/03
Bone Thugs N Harmony @ House of Blues Sunset Strip 7:30 pm
Frank Black and the Catholics @ El Rey Theatre 8:00 pm
Jeffrey Gaines @ Coach House 8:00 pm
Standing In the Shadows of Motown @ The Wiltern 8:00 pm
Mugg @ Key Club 8:15 pm

Wed, 04/23/03
Cave In @ Chain Reaction 7:30 pm
Mellowdrone @ Troubadour 7:30 pm
Boy Sets Fire @ Roxy Theatre 8:00 pm
Frank Black @ Coach House 8:00 pm

Wed, 04/23/03 (cont.)
O.A.R. @ House of Blues, Anaheim 8:00 pm
SX-10 @ Galaxy Theatre 8:00 pm

Thu, 04/24/03
Cursive @ Glass House 7:00 pm
Rocket From the Crypt @ El Rey Theatre 7:00 pm
SX-10 with Mower @ Whisky 7:30 pm
Loudon Wainwright III @ Coach House 8:00 pm
Maria McKee @ Roxy Theatre 8:00 pm
Motorhead @ House of Blues Anaheim 9:00 pm

Fri, 04/25/03
A.F.I. @ Hollywood Palladium 6:30 pm
An Intimate Evening with y & T : All Original Members @ Coach House 8:00 pm
Maria McKee @ Roxy Theatre 8:00 pm
Super Soul Sisters @ The Wiltern 8:00 pm
Bone Thugs N Harmony @ House of Blues Anaheim 8:30 pm
Motorhead @ House of Blues Sunset Strip 9:00 pm

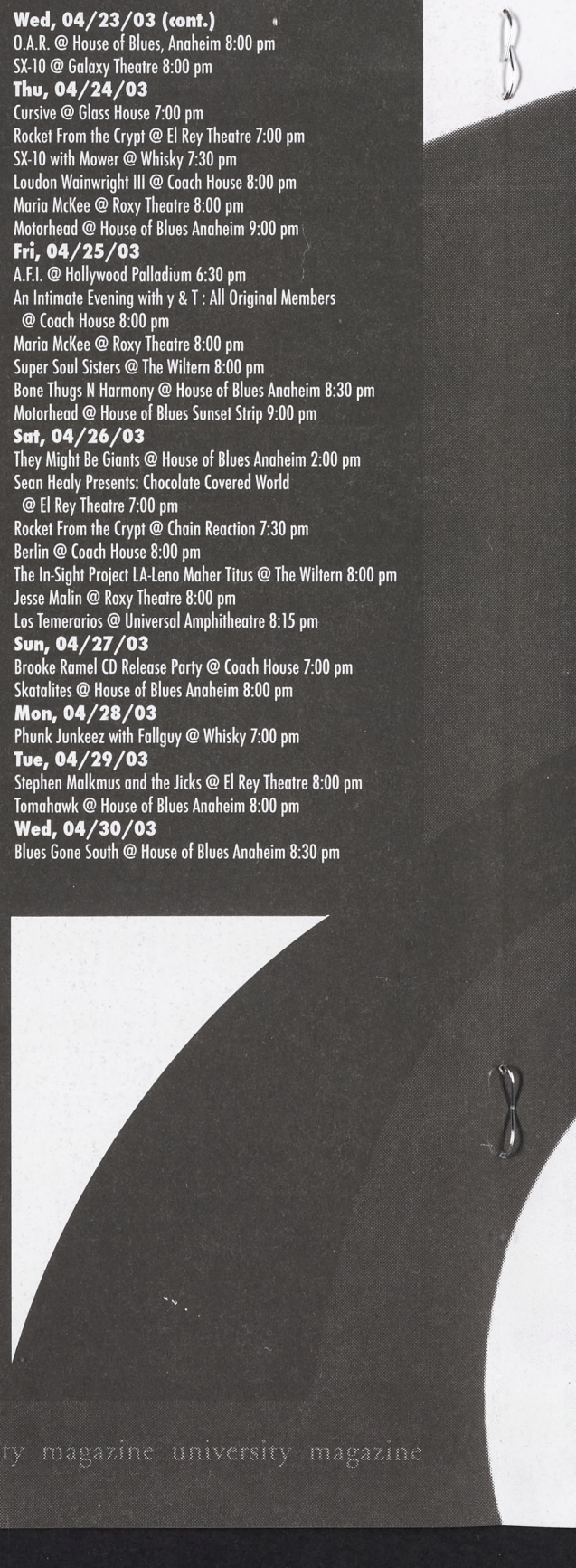
Sat, 04/26/03
They Might Be Giants @ House of Blues Anaheim 2:00 pm
Sean Healy Presents: Chocolate Covered World @ El Rey Theatre 7:00 pm
Rocket From the Crypt @ Chain Reaction 7:30 pm
Berlin @ Coach House 8:00 pm
The In-Sight Project LA-Leno Maher Titus @ The Wiltern 8:00 pm
Jesse Malin @ Roxy Theatre 8:00 pm
Los Temerarios @ Universal Amphitheatre 8:15 pm

Sun, 04/27/03
Brooke Ramel CD Release Party @ Coach House 7:00 pm
Skatalites @ House of Blues Anaheim 8:00 pm

Mon, 04/28/03
Phunk Junkeez with Fallguy @ Whisky 7:00 pm

Tue, 04/29/03
Stephen Malkmus and the Jicks @ El Rey Theatre 8:00 pm
Tomahawk @ House of Blues Anaheim 8:00 pm

Wed, 04/30/03
Blues Gone South @ House of Blues Anaheim 8:30 pm



Local

Carpenter Center

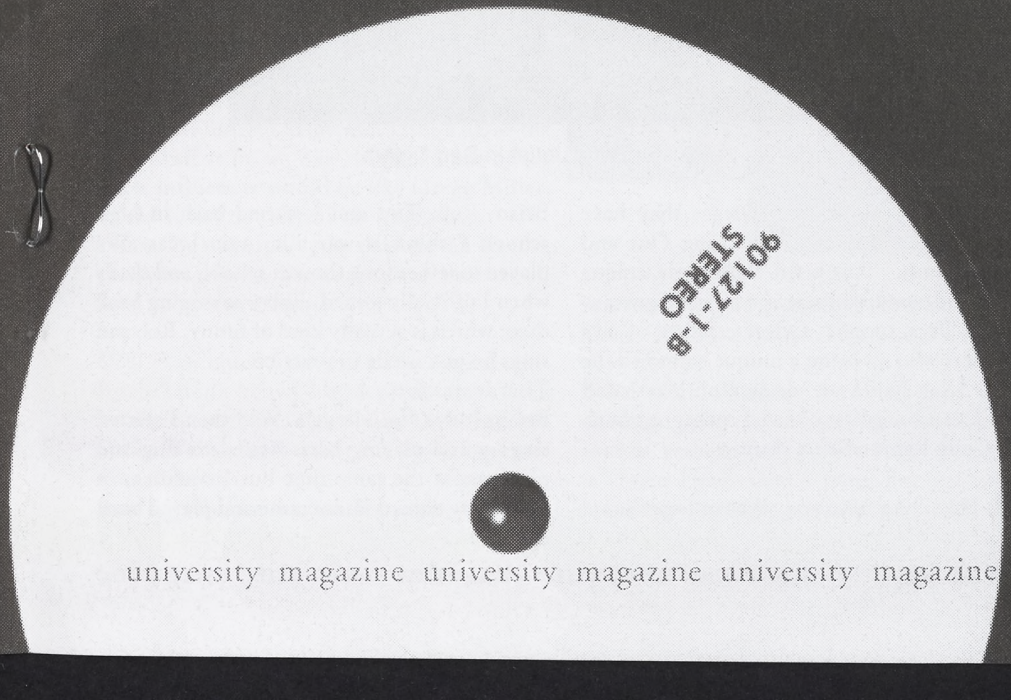
03/09
Claudia Villela and Ricardo Peixoto
Jazz Cabaret
7pm
03/12
Joe Goode
8pm
03/19
Chucho Valdes Quartet
8pm
03/26-27
The World Goes Round

Music Department

Thur 03/10 8:00pm
Vocal Jazz
DRH Christine Helferich, Director $8/5
Fri 03/11 8:00pm
Piano Department Recital
DRH Craig Richey, Director FREE
Tues 03/15 8:00pm
Music Guild
DRH St. Petersburg String Quartet`

Music Department (cont.)

(310) 552-3030
Wed 03/23 8:00pm
Composer's Guild
DRH Justus Matthews, Director FREE
Thur 03/24 8:00pm
Faculty Artist Series
DRH Robin Cox Ensemble $10/7
Sat 03/26 7:30pm
Bill Holman Jazz Concert
Univ. Theater Jazz Institute $20/15
Sun 03/27 3:00pm
Jazz Festival
DRH Jazz Institute $15/10
Mon 03/28 8:00pm
Drums & Drummers
DRH Michael Carney, Director $8/5
Tues 03/29 8:00pm
Brass Ensembles
DRH Jeff Reynolds, Director $8/5
Wed 03/30 8:00pm
Jazz Combos
C100 Neal Finn, Director FREE
Wed 03/30 8:00pm
Collegium Musicum
DRH Greg Maldonado, Director $8/5



Venue info:

Chain Reaction:
1652 W. Lincoln Ave., Anaheim,
(714) 635-6067, www.allages.com
Coach House:
Capistrano: 33157 Camino Capistrano Road,
San Juan Capistrano, (949) 496-8930,
www.thecoachhouse.com
El Rey Theatre:
5515 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles,
(323) 936-6400
Galaxy Theatre:
3503 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana,
(714) 957-0600, www.galaxytheatre.com
Glass House:
200 W. Second St., Pomona, (714) 647-7704,
www.goldenvoice.com
Great Western Forum:
3900 W. Manchester Blvd., Inglewood
(310) 330-7300
The Grove of Anaheim:
2200 E. Katella Ave., Anaheim,
(714) 712-2700, www.thegroveofanaheim.com
Hollywood Palladium:
6215 Sunset Blvd., Hollywood,
(323) 962-7600,
www.hollywoodpalladium.com
House of Blues (2 locations):
Anaheim:
S. Disneyland Drive, Anaheim,
(714) 778-2583, www.hob.com
Sunset:
8430 Sunset Blvd., Hollywood,
(323) 845-5100, www.hob.com
Key Club:
9039 Sunset Blvd., W. Hollywood,
(310) 274-5800, www.keyclub.com
Kodak Theatre:
6801 Hollywood Blvd., Hollywood,
(323) 308-6363, www.kodaktheatre.com.
Roxy Theatre:
9009 Sunset Blvd., W. Hollywood,
(310) 276-2222, www.theroxytheater.com
Shrine Auditorium:
665 W. Jefferson Blvd., Los Angeles,
(213) 749-5123
Soma, San Diego:
3350 Sports Arena Blvd. Suite I
San Diego, 92110
email: info@somasandiego.com
hotline: (619) 226-7662
Troubadour:
9081 Santa Monica Blvd., W. Hollywood,
(310) 276-1158, www.troubadour.com
Universal Amphitheatre:
100 Universal City Plaza, Universal City,
(818) 777-3931
The Wiltern:
3790 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles,
(213) 380-5005.
Whisky:
8901 Sunset Blvd., W. Hollywood,
(310) 652-4202.

OFFSET

on the record

Story and photos by Emily Byrd

Rob Merto, left, and Brian Banks of Offset rock the crowd at the Soma Band Joust in San Diego.

For the past four years, the up-and-coming band Offset has been working to make a name for themselves, not only in their hometown of San Diego, but all over California. Offset started out as a high school band with only two of their current members. The past few years have been a long but fruitful process for them.

Offset have played with popular bands such as Death on Wednesday, The Matches and many others, but now, as the winners of the Soma Band Joust in San Diego, they have earned a spot opening for Strung Out and Guttermouth. This band, with their unique sound and wonderful stage presence, is guaranteed to be a success. Offset consists of five members who all bring a unique sound to the band: Brian Banks on vocals, Rob Merto and Tim Dean on guitar, Matt Lindsay on bass, and Craig Ramondie on drums.

UM: How long have you all been together?

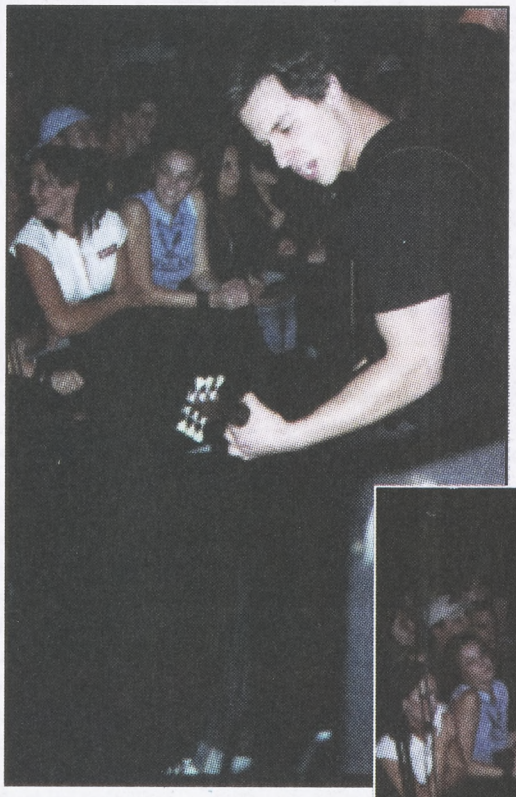
Brian: Rob, Tim and I started back in high school; I think it was our junior year. We played together for a show at school, and that's when I officially joined. Rob was singing back then, which is actually kind of funny. Rob can sing, he just needs to practice.

Tim: It was fun.

Brian: It was fun, though. And then I started singing and playing bass. I tried to sing and play bass at the same time but I couldn't, so then a guy named James came and played bass.

Then the drummer and bassist we had just weren't going with what we wanted, and so they went. Then Matt joined this last summer, and then Craig shortly followed. So, Offset has been a band for four years, but we just got our final line-up in December when Craig joined.

UM: So how did you come up with Offset?
Tim: We were in Rob's garage—this was like two years ago, Brian wasn't involved with this so he doesn't get to take any credit for how crappy it is—but yeah, we were in Rob's garage and it was me, Rob and an old [band] member Jake. We were trying to figure out what a good name was, and we had a list of names but they just sucked. There was a sign, because Rob's dad makes signs, and it said "Warning: offset pipeline," for pipelines in the street that are all messed up. So we were like, "Hey, Offset!" It didn't make any sense, but hey, it's a name.



UM: Who are the major bands that inspire you?
Brian: That's the coolest thing about our band, that everyone has a lot of different influences and that's how we get all our different sounds. Like me, I like everything from like Deafland or the Police or classical music. I like some rap and stuff, but not really. I always liked punk.
Craig: I'm all about punk rock, like Strungout and stuff like that—I like fast drumming.
Matt: I'm more into metal, not too hard-core, but stuff like From Adam to Ashes.
Rob: I'm really into Incubus, and more mainstream stuff like Tool and Hoobastank
Tim: I'm kind of in there with those guys but then I like Social Distortion. I like a lot of the same stuff as Brian, like NOFX. Some of my older influences would be like Gregg Miller, or old Elvis, not any of his Vegas crap.
Brian: But the point is that we all have a common ground, but at the same time we all have complete extremes.

UM: How much have you all been touring?
Brian: I don't know—we've pretty much been up the coast. But we've played as far as New York. We've been trying to do a lot more shows, though.
Rob: I really like the San Francisco scene.
Brian: Yeah, road trips are the best.

UM: Who are the bands you've played with?
Craig: I think the biggest band we've played with is Death on Wednesday.
Rob: The Matches were cool.
Brian: Yeah, The Matches are a cool band. They're up in Oakland. We played with The Line a couple times.

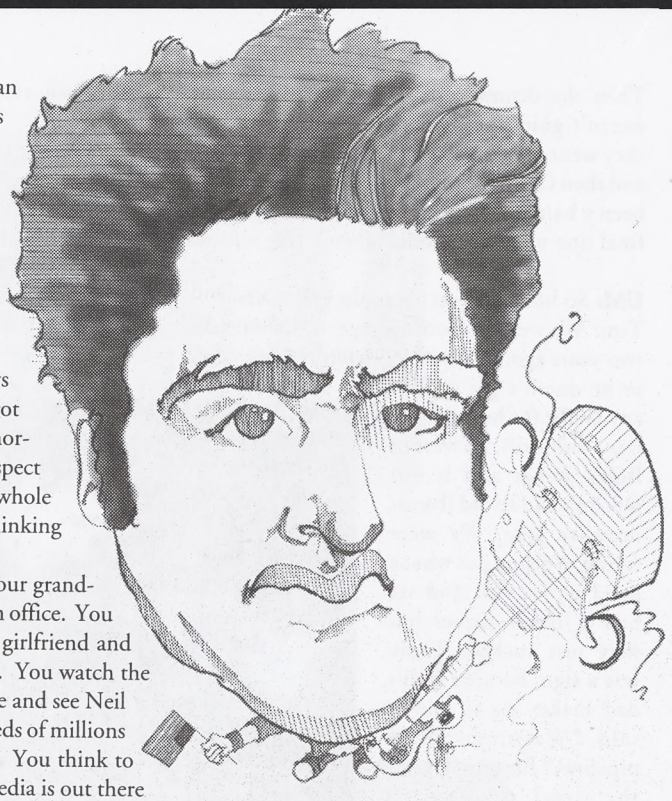
UM: Who do you aspire to play with?
Brian: We now get to play with Strung Out, which will be hot. I don't know, it would be fun to play with…I don't know, there's so many bands. I don't know what would be the best show for us.
Craig: I think Alkaline Trio would be a sick show to play.
Brian: Yeah, Alkaline Trio…the good thing about the scene now is there's a lot of different sounds, you can go to a show. A good example is Thrice. I guess they're punk, but they have a lot of metal sounding music, and I don't want to say emo, but they have that sound, too. So they have so many different kids there at every show.

Rob Merto, above and right, wails on guitar for adoring fans at the Soma Band Joust. The competition won Offset a spot opening for Strung Out and Guttermouth.

UM: All right, you all have to tell me some embarrassing stories that have happened.
Rob: Oh, I got one. We were in New York, and we were staying at my aunt's house. I went downstairs.
Brian: We were sleeping outside on the balcony.
Rob: Yeah, and I went downstairs because I wanted to throw stuff at the guys who were sleeping downstairs.
Brian: Apples.
Rob: Yeah, apples. They were on the ground, and I walked back in the house—not to mention that it was like 10 o'clock at night, 12 o'clock at night—
Brian: It was late.
Rob: I hear this buzzing noise and am like "What the hell is that?" and I just open the fridge and I'm thinking, "What is that noise?" All of a sudden there's a bee, a bumblebee like the size of a walnut buzzing in my pants. I'm jumping around and screaming. I take my pants off, and I'm jumping around the kitchen butt-naked, and Brian comes in watching me jump in my pants.
Brian: So pretty much, I thought he was pretty crazy. Yeah, we like messing around. Like today, I scared Tim with a blow horn.
Tim: Okay, I walk into my apartment carrying like 40 sodas for the kids that come from Orange County on the bus. I walk in and Brian shoves this air horn in my face, and I'm like, "Thanks, buddy." It hurt like hell.
Brian: Matt likes to pass out a lot, when he's drinking or whatever, and once he passes out, it's free game to do whatever. We've peed on him, we've written on him, we've tried to wake him up with a frying pan. We had to hit him twice though, he didn't wake up the first time. UM

UM special: NOFX's Fat Mike talks politics

Illustration by Eli Harris



Hello people. My name is Fat Mike and someone at this publication asked me to write a column. I told them that I'm not a writer. Evidently they didn't care cuz here I am. The time is 1:11 a.m. That's a pretty cool time. I'm not drunk, although I had five beers earlier while watching the old punk movie "Suburbia" at a friend's house. Before the movie we were drinking and talking about the war. It's what San Franciscans do on Tuesday nights.

We were discussing nuclear proliferation and whether or not it's better to have mutually assured destruction with many nations having nukes, or is it better if only the major super powers have them. It was your standard pseudo-intellectual drivel that makes you feel like your college debate class really paid off. Personally, I would feel a lot safer if only a few nations had nukes, but this is not the point. The point is, that we were minding our own business, when this girl sits down (I think she had one too many espresso shots) and starts to give us her opinion on the Middle East crisis.

"You know," she says, "all it takes is one cap full of chemical weapons placed in New York City, and everyone there will be dead. Saddam and Al Qaida are going to attack the U.S. again sooner or later, so we might as well get him out of there now before another attack. I'm against the war, you know, but I would just feel better if Saddam Hussein was not around any longer."

I listened politely. All I could think about was, I hope the expression on my face wasn't too strange, cuz I wasn't quite sure what sort of emotions I was feeling. I think I was smiling. That's weird. Why would I be smiling? I went to this girl's graduation six years ago. This girl was a fucking college graduate, and she was speaking as if she just got off work at the dairy in Shitown, Iowa. I didn't know where to start. Suddenly, I didn't start. I decided not to start. Then it came to me. It's not her fault.

This is an educated woman living in San Francisco and she's buying the shit we hear on the news like everybody else in this country. It's not her fault. She's trying to oppose the war, but she keeps hearing things on television that kind of make sense to her. Why should she doubt CNN? They're the biggest and most respected news agency in the world. They've got Wolf Blitzer. Why would any normal citizen of this country suspect the media is not telling the whole story? You don't grow up thinking that.

You watch the news with your grandfather and see Nixon resign from office. You watch the news with your first girlfriend and witness Hinckley shoot Reagan. You watch the news with your dorm roommate and see Neil Bush go to jail for selling hundreds of millions of dollars worth of junk bonds. You think to yourself, it's a good thing the media is out there to report all these evil doers doing their evil deeds. It's a good thing that Woodward and Bernstein (Redford and Hoffman) were there to tell us the truth. It's a good thing. It's a good, good thing.

Now when you see an AOL poll saying that 76 percent of Americans support the war, you'll understand. When you see Michael Moore get booed at the Oscars, you'll understand. When you see a war rally in Concord, you'll understand. It's not that Americans are inherently stupid, it's that they are inherently gullible. Not only that, but it's also very soothing to live in a state of denial. Life is a hell of a lot easier if you believe. Believing in God, believing in democracy, believing in the president, believing in the news, it's all so easy. You really can't blame most Americans for doing it. Lies feel great; it's truth that hurts like a bitch. It's truth that makes your stomach churn. It's truth that keeps you up all night. It's truth that makes you wanna drink that last beer.

Americans don't want the truth and our government is not going to make them listen to it. The owners of this country want the renters to be happy and that's just how it goes. That's why Clear Channel (the corporation that owns over 1200 radio stations and 39 television stations since the Republican Congress deregulated the industry) is organizing war rallies. War rallies are much more pleasant than protests. That's why none of the major network news stations will air the execution of American soldiers in Iraq. It's a bit unsettling.

That's why I was smiling at the girl in the bar. Who am I to ruin her good time? Why should I throw a bunch of truth poop on her new dress? I'll just keep smiling, drink another beer, and go watch my punk rock movie.

Not likely. No, I had to tell her that she didn't know shit. I had to tell her that Saddam and Al Qaida fucking hate each other, and that Saddam fought Muslim fundamentalists for eight years in Iran. I had to tell her that Osama bin Laden has called Hussein an apostate, somebody who needs to be killed. I had to tell her that although Saddam is a fucking asshole maniacal murderer, destroying his country while uniting the world against us was definitely not going to make her safer.

I also added that according to Scott Ritter, ex-U.N. weapons inspector, Iraq has no known chemical weapons that are still good. Every factory that could produce those kinds of weapons were shut down by the U.N. in the '90s and all the biological and chemical weapons that Iraq bought from the United States in the '80s have a shelf life of three to five years max. I told her that Iraq is not a real threat to the United States, but this war *is* a real threat. Oh, and I also said the only reason you say you're against the war is so you wont get kicked out of your thespian friend's ecstasy party. Nice.

Am I fucking happy now? Now there's one more person who I've turned into a sleepless alcoholic with a tummy ache. Too fucking bad. Somebody's got to be the bearer of bad news, and I've got a lot of free time on my hands. If the press isn't going to do it, I will. I'll write columns for student papers. I'll tell people to check out indymedia.org. I'll start a Web site called punkvoter.com.

Misery loves company, and I'm aiming on bumming out a few hundred thousand more Americans. That's what being American is all about. Bumming other people out. It's our history. It's our tradition. It's our legacy. So look out people, I've got a stoke extinguisher that's full of facts. Truth hurts and it's coming your way. You might as well accept it now, cuz sooner or later it's gonna find you and it won't be pleasant.

Collective enlightenment: Hip-hop's true identity

By Allison Eaton

What does hip-hop mean to you? Answers will vary immeasurably, and rightfully so. The ample supply of misinformation and pompous, profit-driven propaganda the media supplies us with is misleading and empty of hip-hop's original, intended meaning. This, among many other current issues within the hip-hop culture, was addressed during a discussion Feb. 27 in The Karl W.C. Anatol Conference Center, where an eclectic group of individuals gathered to view Rachel Raimist's "Nobody Knows My Name," a documentary of female MCs in the world of underground hip-hop.

Kristine M. Wright and Jessica McKinney, who co-teach sociology of popular culture—a class that examines hip-hop in terms of race, gender, class and comodification—at UC Irvine, led the open forum discussion. They explained how media giants including MTV, VH1 and even BET block hip-hop's true message with incorrect portrayals of the culture via exploitative music videos that degrade the artists and their culture. There is no social or cultural message of positivity within the context of such videos, many of which tend to focus on misogyny, flashy jewelry, flashy cars, flashy designer labels and the like— it's all about sex and the bling-bling.

Unfortunately, as a result, the majority of hip-hop fans are completely unaware of what hip-hop truly is.

"A distinction needs to be made between hip-hop and 'hip-pop'," said Dr. Reiland Rabaka, a professor of black studies at Cal State Long Beach. As he explained, hip-pop is a product of the widespread objectification and misrepresentation of hip-hop culture by profit-driven media groups.

So, what is hip-hop?

Bakari Kitwana touches on a common misconception in his book titled The Hip Hop Generation: The Crisis in African American Culture. As surprising as it may sound, hip-hop is not merely a genre of music. Many tend to assume rap music and hip-hop are one and the same, when rap music is actually only one of hip-hop's many integral components.

The Universal Zulu Nation offers an accurate description on its official Web site, where they decree hip-hop to be a "cultural movement aimed at finding real world solutions to real world problems." It is further explained that the heart of the movement aims to uplift people mentally, spiritually, physically, economically and socially, so as to improve peoples' lives. To better comprehend the social and cultural substance of the movement, one must first understand its roots.

Hip-hop first began evolving amidst the disenfranchised, street-gang infested neighborhoods of the Bronx in the mid-1970s as a socially cohesive celebration of life that promoted peace, love and unity during a neglected community's desperate times. Afrika Bambaataa, a founding member of the Zulus, is also one of the founding fathers of this social celebration that would soon evolve into a movement. He is generally known as the "godfather of hip-hop," and he stresses the need for individuals to seek knowledge, to have wisdom and to be understanding. It is upon this ideology that hip-hop was born.

Kitwana cites the aftermath of the Civil Rights movement and the culture wars of the 1980s Reagonomics era as playing key roles in keeping the culture infused with life. "The repression of inner-city African-Americans" resulted in hip-hop's continued value as an institution of social protest and conflict resolution.

"Hip-hop music is a form of protest music; hip-hop [artists] speak out about inequality, racism, sexism, political issues—everything—in their music," Rabaka said. A very good example, he pointed out, is the current "war on terrorism" and the war in Iraq.

"You've got [people] out there calling for peace, calling for change," he said. "It's our way of letting people know we don't stand behind war." Hip-hop, then, gives a voice to the voiceless and their lets individuals and opinions be heard. This is important in today's social climate, where it seems that how much freedom of speech a person has directly relates to how much money he or she has.

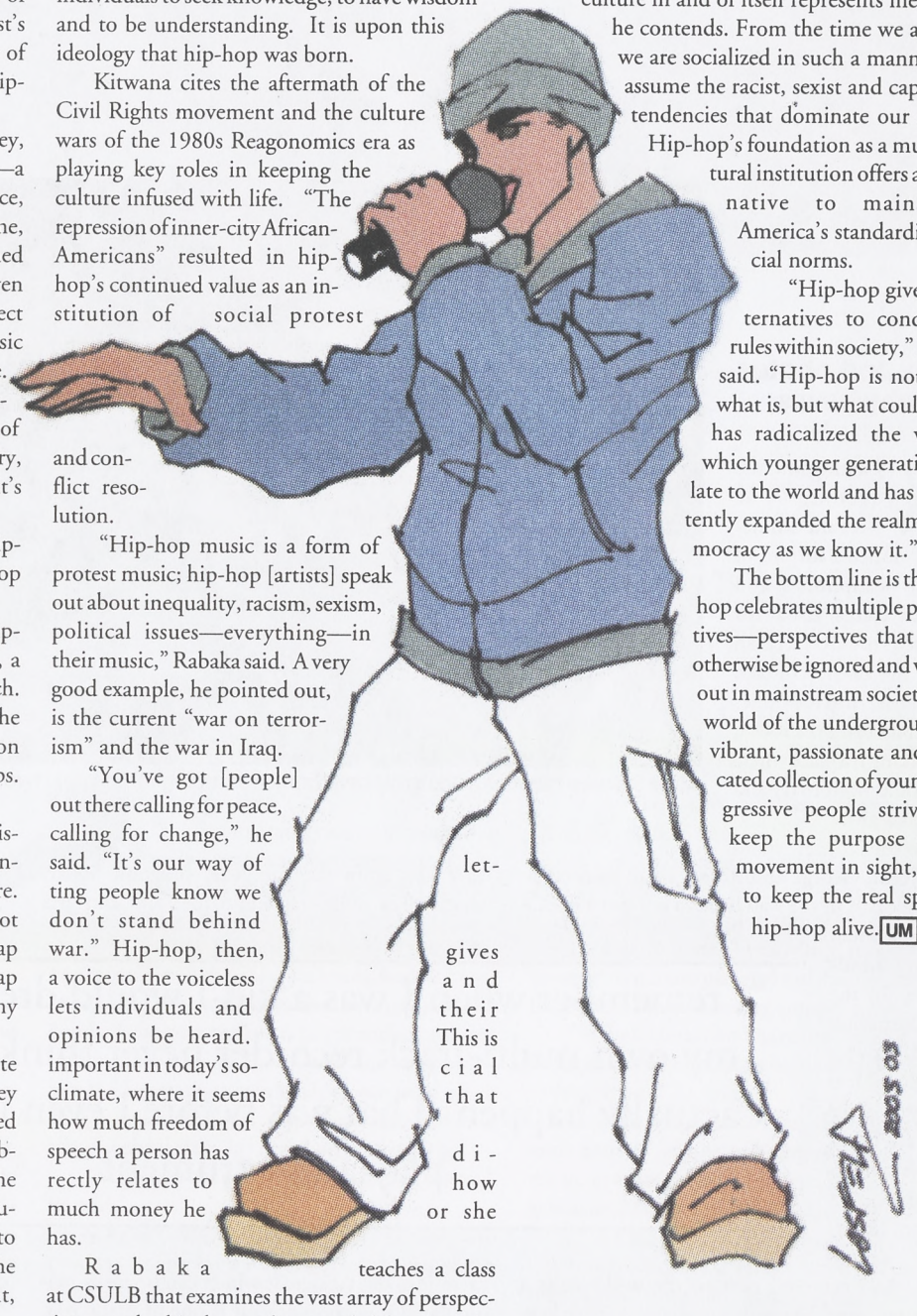
Rabaka teaches a class at CSULB that examines the vast array of perspectives on the hip-hop culture and delves into its dialectical existence. The class discusses political, economic, philosophical and sociological studies of race and racism, as well as sexuality and sexism using hip-hop as a tool for examination.

"What I'm trying to do here is use popular culture as an aid in raising the collective social consciousness in our society," Rabak said. "Contemporary hip-hop is my tool."

Why do we need to raise the social consciousness as a collective group? Because American culture in and of itself represents inequality, he contends. From the time we are born we are socialized in such a manner as to assume the racist, sexist and capitalistic tendencies that dominate our society. Hip-hop's foundation as a multi-cultural institution offers an alternative to mainstream America's standardized social norms.

"Hip-hop gives us alternatives to conditional rules within society," Rabaka said. "Hip-hop is not about what is, but what could be. It has radicalized the way in which younger generations relate to the world and has consistently expanded the realm of democracy as we know it."

The bottom line is that hip-hop celebrates multiple perspectives—perspectives that would otherwise be ignored and weeded out in mainstream society. The world of the underground is a vibrant, passionate and dedicated collection of young, progressive people striving to keep the purpose of the movement in sight, trying to keep the real spirit of hip-hop alive. UM



Illustrations by Anh Losfeld

Mixing to the beat of his own ***drum machine***

Story and photos by Toby Lewis

Mike Scnhee has been doing his own home recording for the past two decades.

Walking into the room, one would immediately notice a surplus of cables, headphones and various items used for making music strewn about the floor. Guitars, keyboards, microphones and cables litter the room, not making it a place where one would want to try and impress a girl.

In the corner stand Paul, John, George and Ringo, in all their cardboard glory. On the wall hangs a self-portrait of a young woman wearing headphones. In the other corner lies a bed, covers ruffled as if it is merely a place to take a break from the cognitive processes that so inherently create music. And centered next to the wall stands a computer, complete with a midi compatible keyboard, speakers and stereo equipment.

The computer screen displays endless lines of wave files from the computer program Sonar, which takes midi and audio files and converts them into digital signals which can be easily manipulated in a computer. It is one of many programs used by recording engineers to produce music, and it is a favorite among some musicians who like to record their music from the privacy of their own home. This particular room is home to Mike Schnee, a 39-year-old resident of Long Beach and home recording aficionado.

"I remember when I was a kid I would dream of owning my own multi-track recorder never thinking it would actually happen," Schnee remembers. "That was before I even knew how to play and instrument." He has been doing his own home recordings since 1983.

"This is not a hobby," he says. "I always joke around that my job [at Costco] is more like a hobby. This is my life. This is what I think about, this is what I spend money on and this is what I spend my time doing. It's this."

> "I remember when I was a kid I would dream of owning my own multi-track recorder never thinking it would actually happen. That was before I even knew how to play an instrument."
>
> --Mike Schnee

Schnee got his first four-track recorder in 1983, and has been hooked on doing home recordings since then. He went through six different

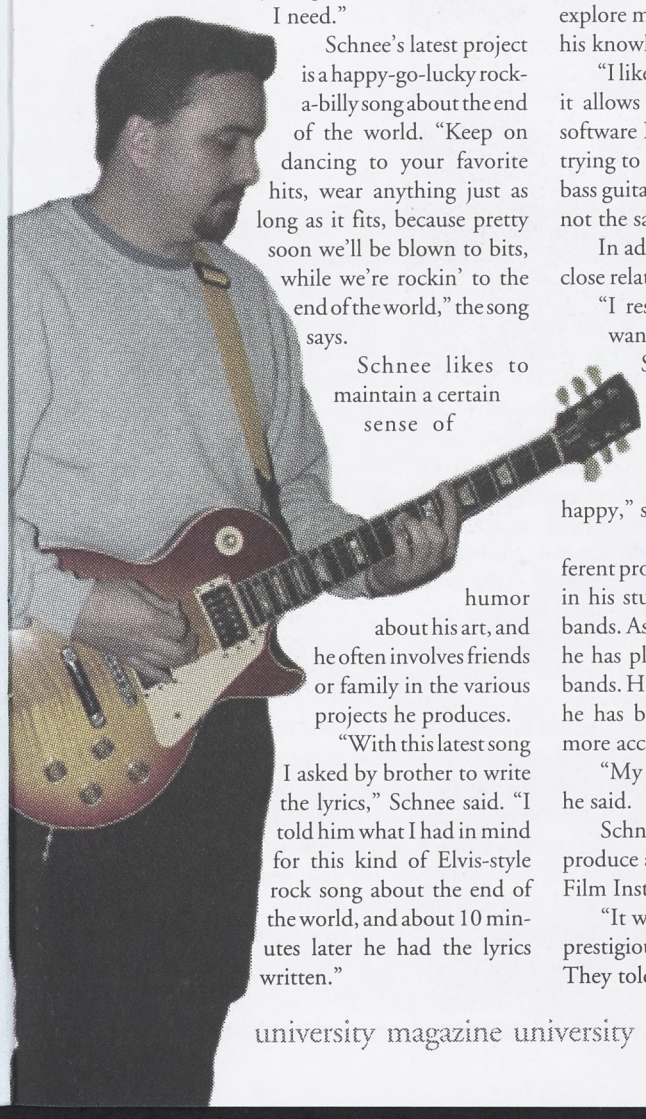
four-track recorders before finally upgrading to the digital Roland VS880, which is a digital multi-track recorder.

"I've been doing music with Schnee for about as long as I can remember," longtime friend and bandmate Jerry Pokracki said. "We used to do recordings with the four-tracks where we would get together and just record a lot of silly sounds and noise and things. Then we throw them all together and layer them and add drums or other things."

Schnee recorded three albums of his own original music with the VS880 before upgrading last year to a sound card for his computer. The Aardvark Direct Pro Q10, the sound card he now uses, provides him with completely digital and unlimited track recording capabilities.

"Basically, I went from four-track analog to unlimited digital," he said. "It is great. With the four track, I would take three tracks and move them onto one track to create room on the other tracks. The quality was crap. Now I have pretty much everything I need. Not everything I want, but everything I need."

Mike Schnee finds inspiration amidst the cables and equipment in his home recording studio. Above and at left, he lays down some guitar riffs.



Schnee's latest project is a happy-go-lucky rock-a-billy song about the end of the world. "Keep on dancing to your favorite hits, wear anything just as long as it fits, because pretty soon we'll be blown to bits, while we're rockin' to the end of the world," the song says.

Schnee likes to maintain a certain sense of humor about his art, and he often involves friends or family in the various projects he produces.

"With this latest song I asked by brother to write the lyrics," Schnee said. "I told him what I had in mind for this kind of Elvis-style rock song about the end of the world, and about 10 minutes later he had the lyrics written."

Schnee likes getting involved in projects with other people because it gives him the chance to explore more of his creative side as well as expand his knowledge of his computer software.

"I like recording with other musicians because it allows me to get better acquainted with the software I'm working with," he said. "When I'm trying to record while at the same time holding a bass guitar in my lap [sitting at my computer], it's not the same."

In addition to music, Schnee's life consists of close relationships with his family and his friends.

"I respect the fact that he's doing what he wants to do and it makes him happy," said Schnee's father, Duane. "A lot of people don't get that."

"I would rather see him doing what he is doing and be happy than him making $100,000 a year and not be happy," said his mother, Phyllis.

Schnee has been involved in many different projects with other musicians, both at home in his studio as well as in live settings with live bands. As an accomplished singer and songwriter, he has played many shows with the various live bands. However, out of all the projects with which he has been involved, none have brought him more acclaim than his own home recordings.

"My music has been played on the big screen," he said.

Schnee recalls when he was commissioned to produce a score for a short film for the American Film Institute.

"It was a student thesis film. The AFI is very prestigious. I met with the director and producer. They told me what they wanted and I told them what I could give them and I basically put together an acoustic guitar soundtrack. They loved it."

The film was played at the Archlight Theatre in Los Angeles. In addition to that project, Schnee has worked with audio production demos.

"I did an industry training video," he said. "You know those little videos they show at work and everyone gets together to watch the video. This one was about self defense and I did the theme song for that and got paid for it."

Another claim to fame for Schnee is that he co-produced and recorded three songs for the Los Angeles-based band Bang Sugar Bang. The band's debut album, titled "Greatest Hits," was released early in March.

"I recorded and co-produced three of the songs off of their album," Schnee said.

"I'm thinking that if I wanted to I could make a lot of money doing this. If there is a chance for me to make money doing this, well, I'll do it."

So far, Schnee's recording projects have brought him more personal satisfaction and gratification and less monetary compensation.

"What little money I have made doing this has been money that has come to me as opposed to me seeking it out," he said.

"I think it is a shame that Mike has not been more actively seeking to promote himself and his music in what he does," Pokracki said. "He is a genius and could make a lot of money."

"I don't actively seek out work, either because I'm lazy or because I would rather do the work than spend my time searching for the work," Schnee said. "I think it is more the latter, or maybe a little bit of both." UM

Concert reviews

Illustration by Jeremy Benns

The Politicians • The Tiki Bar, Costa Mesa

I went to the Tiki Bar in Costa Mesa not expecting much—wow, was I surprised. The Tiki played host to a new punk band, The Politicians. The event was actually only the band's second show, so saying the band is new is an overstatement. When I got to the bar, I was surprised to see a good turnout for a new band playing on a weeknight. It may have been all friends and family, but a crowd is a crowd—no matter if your mom is in the audience blowing you kisses and taking snap shots for the family photo album.

From the first song, "Made to Lose," it was obvious that the Politicians are a band to be reckoned with. The band sounds like the guys from The Clash and the boys from Social Distortion got into a rumble while Green Day jumped in with a few cheap shots to the head. Vocalist and lead guitarist Adam Wilker was awesome as he sang in an up-tempo melodic tone. While rhythm guitarist Pete Deidrerich added spunk on guitar, Joe Rubens kept the mood steady on bass and Rob Harvick tore it up on the drums.

A highlight of the show came when the band got some fine young ladies on stage to sing along to the Buddy Holly cover, "Oh Boy." Another great song, which had a humorous tone and a catchy chorus, was "You're Finally Dead." The band sounds like it would be great to do Irish drinking songs because of their up-tempo approach and sing-along vocals.

The Politicians are currently playing more shows around the Orange County and Los Angeles areas. Make sure to check out the band the next time they are in town; you will not be disappointed.

— Joe Licavoli

Never Heard Of It • Chain Reaction, Anaheim

It was a typical night with the typical Chain Reaction crowd; however, Never Heard Of It gave a performance that was anything but. Their fill-in drummer, Chris Dalley, had learned all their music in just two days and had been playing with them for only three. This kink in their usual line-up had no adverse affects as NHOI assaulted the crowd with their trademark intensity and provided yet another tight performance that keeps their pop-punk predecessors on their toes.

Swinging the microphone and crouching in close, vocalist D.J. Dell'osa never failed to command the crowd's attention as he encouraged massive chorus sing-a-longs. Guitarist Jeff Anenberg gave a skilled performance that was punctuated by his charming stage presence. In his last show with the group, bass player Johnny Brittain revved up the crowd with his irreverent vocals on the rarely performed fan-favorite, "Tequila."

Crowd pleasing songs such as "Alone" and "Satisfied" showcased their talents well, while newer songs virtually excited the panties off the band's young female fan base. They finished off their flawless set by pulling every girl from the front row onstage to dance.

NHOI gave a polished performance that is unusual to see in an unsigned band. Then again, it is unusual for a band of this magnitude to go unsigned, proving once again that they are anything but typical. NHOI will again be playing every stop on the Vans Warped Tour this summer, and are worth checking out if you don't mind elbowing your way through the hoards of teeny bop girls that will surely crowd the stage.

— Leslie Lewis

Cadillac Tramps • House of Blues, Anaheim

I noted the fancy new metal detectors as I climbed the stairs of the House of Blues in Anaheim. The venue has a backwoods feel to it with a giant quilted stage curtain and folk art all over the walls. Standing-room-only makes the venue egalitarian, and all tickets are the same price. Good place to go see a show that's a little too big to fit into the Doll Hut.

The Barroom Heroes were wrapping up the last few songs of their set when we walked in. With songs like "Prizefighter" and "Tattoos & Stories," the Heroes cater to a particular crowd, and they were all there. The bassist and the two other front men were shirtless and sweaty on stage, chests boasting various stages and styles of tattooing. They have gained a new guitar player from the no longer existent Southern California band "Boobie Trap," and are better for it.

After dropping out of the local scene for several months to do shows in Arizona, the Barroom Heroes are back with a vengeance, doing a few shows a month and coming out with a long-awaited second album. The first album contained only five songs and has been circulating for over a year. The band's throaty singer and feisty but humorous lyrics draw you in and make you feel like doing a few laps in the pit. Watch these guys at a smaller club, though, because they can really get the crowd going.

Throwrag stole the show as always with its big band feel and proved again that nothing beats a fat English guy playing a washboard and cowbells with a pair of spoons for a good time. The lead singer looks like an evil Popeye with a jutting chin and the sea in his step. Wearing white cowboy boots and a cow-skull conch, he connects uncannily with the crowd before the end of the first song.

Pantomiming the sound of the cowbell by beating his head with his palm he pulls you into the crazy little world of Throwrag with songs like "Oo-Wada-Wada-Oo-Wada-Hey!" and "Who the F— are You?" You sing along even if you don't know the words. If you haven't seen this local treasure, it's highly recommended. They have a following like the pope, so you're sure to have a friendly crowd wherever you may go.

Gabby of the Cadillac Tramps stole the award for most styling get-up in a fedora and a three-piece suit. The Tramps were hot as always; they are a group of really amazing musicians who never fail to put on a good show. Rumor has it that the old drummer left to play for Coldplay, so Gabby's compadre from his old band the Ex Members was sitting in on the drums.

The play list included all their best songs, including my favorite "Don't You Know" and many songs from their out-of-print albums.

Gabby gave his usual salute to his dad, who never fails to be in the audience somewhere. And the self-proclaimed "cutest little fat Mexican you've ever seen" flashed his amazing voice and smile throughout the set, which guaranteed that whenever the Tramps play, I'm going to be there.

You couldn't have put together a better mix of Southern California bands and gotten such an awesome result as the March 1 show at the Anaheim House of Blues. The crowd was into it, and even though the pit was turned into a pushing match and the collective temper rose a few times to the boiling point, the show was a success and nobody got hurt too badly. All the ingredients were there for one amazing punk rock show.

— Monica L. Pardee

The Dead Kennedys • Galaxy, Santa Ana

Who said the Dead Kennedys are dead, anyway? Some deadbeat loser who's had his head in the ground for the last 20-odd years? The DKs came to Santa Ana's Galaxy Theater Friday, March 21, and played to a crowd of skaters, goths and even grandparents who seemed to know better.

Brandon Cruz, East Bay Ray, Klaus Flouride and D.H. Peligro burst onto the stage in rare form and blew the house away. Forget the annoying 10-year-olds bumming cigarettes, the bartender who insists she won't take anything but cash and certainly the police cars lining the streets outside in search of mindless youth causing mischief.

The real show was right there, before my eyes. I wouldn't have blinked if my life depended on it. I was not, by any stretch of the imagination, a die-hard DK fan before the show but I certainly left a believer.

Though my better judgement tells me not to, I will admit that in a moment of weakness I turned to my friend—so mesmerized by Cruz's tireless energy and the band's dedication to its audience—that I told her I'd be willing to lick the sweat off his 40-plus year old body. She looked at me like I was nuts but I didn't care.

In just a little over 80 minutes, I became the band's biggest, most unlikely fan: married, two dogs, a house in the 'burbs. It's damn good to know that, like the DKs, the part of me that saw punk and new wave coming is still alive.

— Christine G. Adamo

Offset • Soma Band Joust, San Diego

It seems that the music scene is overrun by pop-punk bands trying to make it big. They are trying to be the next Blink 182 or New Found Glory. After going to show after show, all I've wanted to do is to find a band that stands out, a band that has something that sets them apart from the now seemingly mundane world of pop punk. I found that recently while at the Soma Band Joust in San Diego after hearing the band Offset.

Though they belong in the pop-punk category, they bring a unique sound to the stage and bring the audience into their music with their lyrics and their energetic presence. They truly have potential to break out of the norm and become a truly fantastic band. All they have to do is continue on the path they are headed.

Offset won the band joust, which was judged by audience applause, by a landslide. After the band played, the crowd roared in approval, assuring their win and earning them a spot as an opener for Strung Out and Guttermouth on March 21. Their talent comes from a true love for all styles of music, which is evident in their style. This will truly set them apart from and above their competition.

— Emily Byrd

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Critic's corner

CD Review: Massive Attack • "100th Window"

It has been five years since this Bristolian trip-hop trio has produced a record, but all the same, the group has made a point to massively attack the ears with luring sounds. Their latest creation and so-called melancholy masterpiece is "100th Window." With vocal appearances by Blur's Damon Albarn, reggae legend Horace Andy, and the wide eyed Sinead O'Connor, the album takes an electronica trip through the valleys of religion and politics, with some drug stops along the way.

The album opens up with "Future Proof," which is a shaded and mysterious track, which is followed by "What Your Soul Sings." Given the creative freedom on lyric writing, O'Connor makes this track all her own. She also shines a mystic glow on "A Prayer For England," a political track that makes a plea for the ending of violent acts against children. Albarn's appearance on "Small Time Shot Away" gives the track a mysterious feeling of a ghostly resurrection.

Andy's esoteric appearance on "Name Taken" gives the track a reminiscent feel of a nighttime swim in a murky lake. The album closes with "Antistar," a track that is upbeat, but still carries a dark looming cloud. Nevertheless, Massive Attack's "100th Window" seems to be a cuddled creation that is rightfully spoon-poured into ears that are open and waiting.

— Porschia Baker

CD Review: Norah Jones • "Come Away With Me"

As the winner of five Grammy Awards at this year's 45th annual ceremony, Norah Jones' debut album, titled "Come Away With Me," is quite an accomplishment for the newcomer.

The contemporary jazz album combines folk-based pop with soulful blues arrangements. Twelve original and two cover tracks (Hank Williams/Haogy Carmichael) create a smooth blend of rhythmic elements from classic favorites.

The album's title track "Don't Know Why" is emotional, raw and very poetic. It describes a lost love and sets the tone of the entire album.

Each song, in its unique way, describes heartache or a life lesson that we can all relate to. My personal favorites are "Come Away With Me," a soulful plea for love and companionship; "Turn Me On," the ache of a woman waiting for her man, in a way that a "desert waits for rain;" and "I've Got To See You Again," a lusty, tango style beat that describes the cravings of the flesh.

Along with Jones' smoky voice, the piano acoustics and electric and slide guitars help to set a very romantic mood. Each song is sexy, sultry and erotic. Jones indeed has us mesmerized and swept away.

— Ashley Love

Dear doc.

Q: Some of us here at UM go to concerts pretty often, and sometimes when we get home our ears are ringing or we can't hear very well. Are these concerts doing actual long-term damage to our hearing? If so, how can we prevent it while still listening to the music we love?

Answered by Larry Harvey, Clinical Coordinator:

A: Yes, long term damage can result from exposure to excessive noise such as amplified music, power equipment, motorcycles, ski mobiles—essentially any noise that blocks out hearing other sounds. If you notice hearing loss or ringing of the ears after a concert, then your exposure is great and you are at risk of damaging your hearing.

Concerts are great fun and can be attended without compromising your future hearing. Limit exposure—move away from the speakers, wear earplugs to minimize sound, play your own stereo at a reduced volume. In other words, if you can only hear the loud sound and nothing else then it is to loud and can cause future hearing loss. If you notice most of the band members now wear earplugs. The end result is the need for hearing aids at best and/or not correctable hearing loss.

Put some approved earplugs in your ears and go about your daily schedule and see if this is what you want for yourself in the future. Hearing loss due to excessive sounds is preventable—it is up to you.

Q: The UM staff does a lot of studying, and sometimes we need a little help. Is it really beneficial to listen to soothing music, like classical music while studying?

Answered by Renee Twigg, PHN, MS:

A: Listening to classical music while studying may be helpful to some people and make them feel relaxed and able to retain information. The health benefit of listening to soothing music is to relax and reduce stress. However, it depends on the individual student. Some students may want complete silence while studying and would do better with frequent breaks lasting five minutes for each hour of study time. Or take a brisk walk for 10 to 15 minutes to unwind.

Remember, you can make the best use of your study time by taking care of yourself, including eating nutritious meals, exercising, getting enough sleep and planning ahead. Cramming at the last minute is stressful and may not achieve the desired results.

By Julie Guevara

Julie Guevara/UM

Desiree Palazuelos

Desiree Palazuelos was wearing trendy, black-framed glasses with her hair wildly thrown up in a cute ponytail, only the outer image of a soul filled with music and a small dream of a big guitar-playing future.

"I love music," Palazuelos said. "It's been around me my whole life. I can remember waking up in the morning to hear the music on full blast."

Her grandmother played the piano at a conservatory in Mexico while teaching music. Palazuelos' sister also plays the piano at a conservatory in Los Angeles.

Recently, Palazuelos decided to branch out into a different from of music than the one her grandmother and sister had played so well. About a year ago, she purchased an electric guitar and has been attempting to play it ever since.

"I don't think I'm at my full capability," admitted Palazuelos.

Due to a lack of time and funds, she has tried to improve her skills by following how-to books such as "Guitar for Dummies."

"It helps," she said, while laughing at the idea of learning to play from a book. "But it's not like having a professional in front of you. You kind of have to do it on your own and hope you're doing it right."

Palazuelos and a couple of her friends look forward to the day they can play for others, but school is their main concern at this moment. No matter where she is in life, music will always do great things for her.

"It can relax me," explained Palazuelos. "Pump me up. It knows what I'm feeling at the moment. At my worst times, it can sympathize with me or at my best it can rejoice with me."

Every student has a story . . .

Eddie Monterrubio

As Eddie Monterrubio gathered with some friends at a local Acapulco restaurant, they jokingly pondered the usual question, "What have I done with my life?"

To answer his friends' rather thought provoking question, Monterrubio retorts, "But I have a hit Web site!"

They all laugh, but the online community Monterrubio has built, mundorockero.com, is no joke. "There was nothing like that out there," said Monterrubio.

From approximately 30,000 hits a month in the beginning to a whopping 2.5 million hits a month two and a half years later, Monterrubio and his staff have worked hard to keep those figures high. The site is run by Monterrubio and other college students who are dedicated to making sure that those who log on to mundorockero.com are caught up with what's going on in the Latin alternative scene.

"Since Latin alternative music is still underground and not so much mainstream," he said, "it gives them the chance to get more information and learn about artists through interviews."

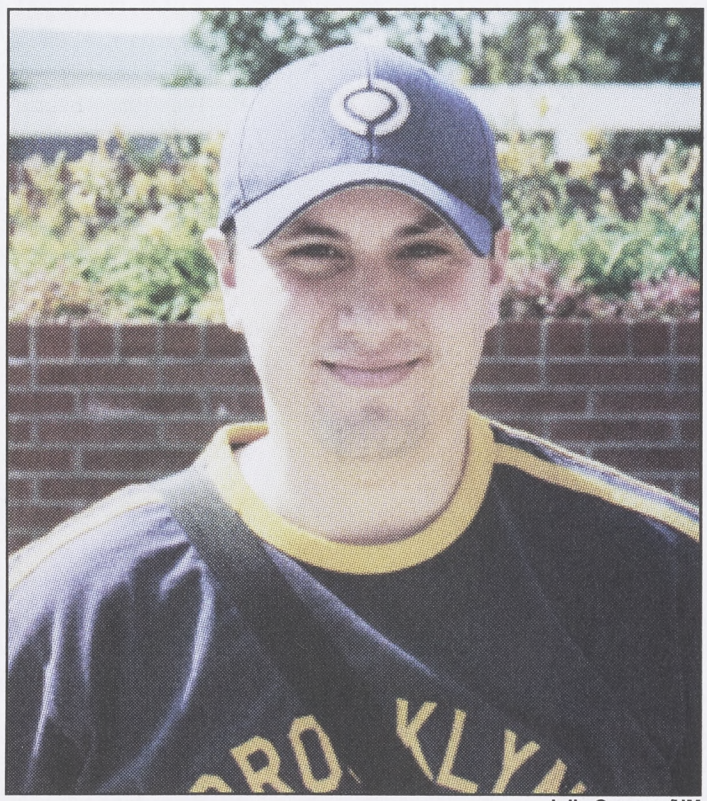
The Web site features interviews, photos from concerts, a calendar, online chats with bands and a place where members can log in and talk to one another.

At this point, the checks may not exactly hit six figures, but any monetary profit that is generated goes right back to mundorockero.com.

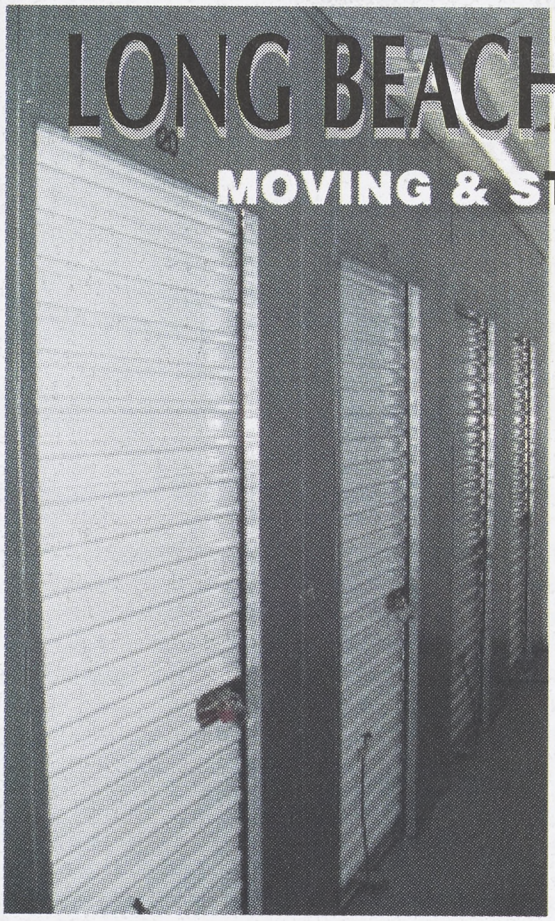
"The passion comes from the music itself and the drive is wanting to share that with an audience and bring the genre to a mainstream level," said Monterrubio.

Even though mundorockero.com has become a great success in terms of popularity, he is still surprised by the recognition they receive.

"We don't think that anyone is actually going on to the site," he said. "When someone is wearing one of our T-shirts, it makes it all worthwhile. That's probably bigger than any check that we can get."



Julie Guevara/UM



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A Public Health Week Event

CSULB Health Facts
Most Students...
Drink Moderately, if at all

- **80.6% drink 0 to 4 drinks**
- **0 = 38.2%**
- **1-2 = 27.2%**
- **3-4 = 15.2%**

Source: CSULB Student Health Services Health Assessment Survey

Lots of useful info @ Health Resource Center Website
www.csulb.edu/shc/hrc